Connecting Voice to Policy to Deliver Services in Education

UKaid from the British people

Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn · PERL ·

Kano State

Citizens' voice in governance spaces is essential for identifying critical service delivery needs. Their involvement in policy spaces can engender commitment and ownership, strengthening mechanisms for responsiveness and accountability. In Kano State, partners are using expanded spaces for engagement in reform processes, to improve education service delivery towards better learning outcomes.

From 2015 to 2018, Kano State ranked 24th out of 36 states in the West African Examination Council (WAEC) exams; this position worsened from 17th place in 2014. In an article published in November 2018,[1] the state admits to having the highest population of out-of-school children in the country, despite spending approximately N145 billion between 2014 and 2018 to deliver services and improve education outcomes.

> In the course of our mapping, we discovered that Kano State has one of the highest populations of children out of school and pays four billion naira for teachers' salaries every month. And we don't have much to show for it", says **Professor Garba Shehu, Chair, Teacher Policy Committee, Kano State**

In Gama community, one of the eleven Wards of Nasarawa Local Government Area in Kano State, constraints in the education sector resonate with the Village Head, Alhaji Rabiu Muhammad Isyaku. Enrolment is low in his community, with far fewer girls in schools. The community also faces challenges recruiting substitute and volunteer teachers. Alhaji Isyaku is determined to turn this situation around not only because of his responsibility as Village Head, but also because the problem was particularly close to home: his daughter was doing poorly in school and he struggled to motivate her to do better.

"In 2016, I joined the Civil Society (CS) partnership in Kano supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) funded programme Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL), to engage with government and demand for good governance", says Alhaji Isyaku. The CS partnership in Kano cuts across all sectors. In 2016, with government actors, they mapped and prioritized critical service areas that required attention: Education as one of the sectors prioritized. According to Nafisa Murtala Ahmad, a broadcaster and member of the partnership, this was because collectively they "felt it needed the most urgent attention". In the sector, poor teacher
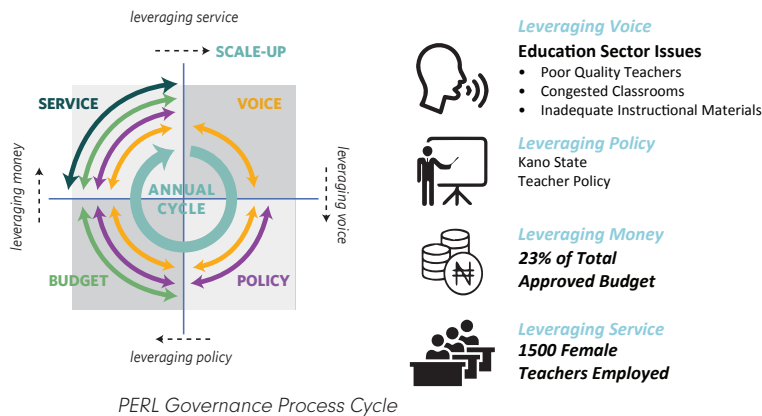
quality, congestion of classrooms and inadequate instructional materials were three key issues that needed to be addressed.

To support the partnership to strengthen engagement between state and non-state actors, PERL facilitated a Public Policy Dialogue on Teacher Quality, in collaboration with the DFID Education Sector programmes: Teacher Development Programme (TDP), Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (ENGINE2) and Discovery Learning Alliance (Fitila) project. During the dialogue, the lack of a Teacher Policy was identified as one of the causes of poor teacher quality. PERL has provided technical support to the Teacher Policy Committee, to develop a policy and ensure broad based stakeholder participation. The policy also incorporates recommendations for addressing classroom congestion and inadequate instructional materials.

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[1] 'Why Kano has highest out-of-school children' - https://guardian.ng/news/why-kano-has-highest-out-of-school-children/

Kano is determined to revamp education in the state and improve its position on the annual WAEC State ranking. In 2018, with support from PERL, the state developed its implementation framework for the Teacher Policy and also assessed the functionality of the Education Management Information System. To address these issues and in response to demands from civil society, the State has allocated 23% of its 2019 budget to the Education Sector. Following recommendation from the Policy, the State has recruited 1,500 female teachers. This is to offset the shortfall in the ratio of female teachers to female pupils and is expected to increase enrolment of girls. In Kano State, stakeholders like Alhaji Isyaku are not only leveraging their voice to influence Policy and ensure delivery of services, they are also applying these principles in their roles at the community level.

PERL Governance Process Cycle

Leveraging Voice
Education Sector Issues
• Poor Quality Teachers
• Congested Classrooms
• Inadequate Instructional Materials

Leveraging Policy
Kano State
Teacher Policy

Leveraging Money
23% of Total
Approved Budget

Leveraging Service
1500 Female
Teachers Employed

In Gama, Alhaji Isyaku is changing the way he is engaging both with his community and with government to push for services to be delivered to people directly affected by various challenges. "After the training, I knew I had to do something with what I had learned", he says. With the support of his people, he has formed, a Community Based Organisation that provides the platform to drive development in Gama. Alhaji Isyaku is developing inputs for his community into the budget and using this to engage members of the House of Representatives.

With his council, he has set up an education sub-committee to implement the recommendations of the education policy. With support from PERL, the sub-committee has developed its first 5- year strategic plan for education in Gama and has organized a fundraiser, which raised about N1.5 million to kick off activities. After a school enrolment drive, over 400 new pupils were enrolled and the community has also received donations of books and writing materials. "We are also encouraging and rewarding bright students, especially girls, to continue their education through a prize we instituted last year," said Alhaji Isyaku. An additional block of three

classrooms for the Government Secondary School, Kaura-Goje, was commissioned by the Member of the House, representing the Gama community through constituency projects in support of the community's effort.

In 2016, Alhaji Rabiu Muhammad Isyaku wasn't sure how to confront the many challenges facing Gama community but now he is going above his duties as traditional leader; he is brimming with ideas and putting structures in place to implement them sustainably adopting processes for budget planning and tracking as well as reforms for education and strategic planning. He is also mentoring village heads of other communities including Gayawa Community in Ungogo Local Government Area, to set up similar structures, using tools from his engagement with PERL, that have helped in Gama community. Learning from the experience, Alhaji Isyaku plans to tackle health challenges next.

We plan to face our health sector issues using the recommendations from the partnership in the health sector". **Alhaji Rabiu Muhammad Isyaku, Village Head, Gama Community, Nassarawa LGA, Kano**

Contact Address:

📍 10 Bobo Street
   Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria

✉ info@perlnigeria.net

🌐 www.perlnigeria.net

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f www.facebook.com/perlnigeria

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The Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) is a five-year pubic sector accountability and governance programme, funded by the UK's Department for International Development. The programme provides support to governments in the core areas of policy development and implementation towards delivering public goods and services; supports citizens to engage with these processes and facilitates evidence-based learning and advocacy.

The opinions expressed in this leaflet are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for international Development